

REMARKS

SENT

TO THE PEOPLE

WHO

CELEBRATED THE 4TH OF JULY, 1835.

AT

WOONSOCKET FALLS.

BY TRISTAM BURGESS.

WOONSOCKET FALLS :
SHERMAN AND WILDER....PRINTERS.
1835.

Providence, August 2, 1835.

MR. SHERMAN :

My Dear Sir—The reception of my friend, Henry Y. Cranston, and myself, at Woonsocket Falls, on the 4th of July, was too kind, courteous and flattering, to be forgotten. The people, on that occasion assembled on the green hill top, under the shade, to finish in generous hilarity a free expression of sentiments, the ceremonial of that very appropriate celebration, were, as you remember, interrupted, and by a sudden and very heavy fall of rain, compelled to leave the table, just at the time when all seemed to expect from me, some reply to such a sentiment, given by a highly respected friend, and received in such a manner, as to merit my warmest acknowledgments. I arose to do this ; and, while looking around on the whole assembly, every eye, every countenance seemed to ask, to demand of me something more substantial than merely the expression of my thanks; some fair and honest account, of how the men in high places, entrusted with high powers, by them and others, the people of these United States, had been, and were doing and performing their official duties. A large concourse of people were before me; veteran age from the fields of '76, and vigorous manhood and blooming youth, from every department of industry were there; and they were the people of the island, of that generous and valiant State, which had, not as a step-mother, but with more than maternal confidence and affection received me to her bosom. The Orator of the day had ably explained to us, the great principles of the revolution ; and it seemed to me, that I could do nothing more appropriate to the occasion, or acceptable to those before me, than to point out to them some of the more important particulars, in which the present rulers of the Nation had departed from those principles in the administration of our government. I had begun to do this, when the rain admonished us to seek a more secure shelter. Thus interrupted, I told the people, that I would send to them, through your Press, what was then in my mind to speak to them. What I then promised, while the thunder was loud in the heavens over our heads, I now request you to aid me in performing. I should sooner have done this, had not unavoidable avocations called for my whole time and attention. Please to print in your paper, or otherwise, and distribute to the people;

The testimony of Tristram Burges, concerning some of those things done by the executive and the councillors and partizans of the executive of the United States, in violation of the great and leading principles of the revolution of 1776, intended to have been spoken by him to the people who celebrated the 4th of July, 1835, at Woonsocket Falls, and now communicated to them through the Free Press, of that place.

Truly and with high respect,

Your obedient servant,

TRISTAM BURGESS.

R E M A R K S.

TEN years ago, when I was first placed in the public service by the people of this State, the waters of this river rolled down these Falls in almost useless and entire solitude. Now, the house of industry, the abode of accommodation and elegance, the place of public instruction, the temple of the living God, are located here on its shores; and the surrounding hills are crowned and crowded with a peopled city. This enchanting exhibition has grown up, under that national policy, which encourages domestic labor; and which, while in your service, it has been my pride and delight, to toil both to preserve and perpetuate. By this delightful vision, I am more than rewarded. I am your debtor, for all, and more than all your high courtesies of this day. To say I thank you, as I most deeply and ardently do, would be but a poor return; and I will not attempt to cancel the delightful obligation of gratitude, by any such inconsiderable equivalent. Much more appropriate to this day, and to your great political interests, would it be for me as a faithful watchman in your service, to compare the policy and measures of the present administration, with the great principles of the revolution, and thereby disclose the safety or the peril of your interests and liberties.

Our forefathers migrated from Europe, and founded governments here, not for the benefit of their parent country, nor to furnish honors and emoluments for those who might rule over them; but to secure and perpetuate their own great interests, life, liberty, and the fruits of their own labors. When England enacted laws subversive of those interests, and "sent hither swarms of officers to harass them, and eat out their substance," they took up the sword, and asserted and secured their independence. It was, therefore, to preserve the benefits of our government for the whole people, and to exclude officers from any monopoly of those benefits, that our revolution was achieved. This was one of the great principles of that revolution. Let it never be forgotten. Question their patriotism, and beware of all their pretensions, who hold that any man, or any set of men, may claim any exclusive right to the benefits of government.

Another great principle of the revolution, grew out of the inherent right of the people to enact their own laws, either by themselves or by their representatives. The Legislative power, the power of making laws, is the highest attribute of sovereignty; for every other power, in any community, does but adjudicate or execute those laws, which have been enacted by the Legislature. Every independent community is a sovereignty, and of right exercises this power. Those men who, in the Mayflower arrived in the harbor of Plymouth, on the 9th day of November, 1620, did, while on board that vessel, subscribe a compact, and form themselves into such a community. Roger Williams and his associates, were, by compact, another such community of men; such too were all the other States, founded in this country before the revolution. They were not, it is true, entirely independent of Great Britain; but to a certain extent, they exercised legislative power. When the King, therefore, undertook to abolish that power, by placing his Veto on their charters

and their laws, the people of the Colonies lifted up the sword against this usurpation; and the Revolution was achieved to abolish that *tyrannical exercise of the Veto power*, and to secure to the people the right of enacting their own laws, by themselves or their representatives.

Permit me to name one other principle of the Revolution. In every sovereign community, each individual member pledges his labor, his life, and his property, to support and defend that community. Under this pledge, such communities can assess taxes, and raise a fund for the common defence and general welfare. This fund constitutes the money power of the community; and because it must be regulated by law, the legislative power alone can have the control of this fund. That power alone can, by themselves or their agents, direct the assessment, the collection, the custody, and the disbursement of this fund, this money power of the State. This control of the money power of each colony, had been claimed and exercised by the Legislatures of each of them, and no *royal governor* of either of them, *had ever dared to meddle with the public money*. Nor did any King of England, no not *one of the tyrannical and all grasping House of Stuart, ever claim the right, or exercise the power to assess or collect any tax in a single colony; or take, hold, or keep, or disburse, so much as one copper of all the money of all the colonies*. When the elder Charles was brought to the block, for his manifold usurpations, he stood on the scaffold with clean hands. He had grasped at power, but never soiled his fingers by contaminating gold. In all that long catalogue of transgressions, alleged against George the third in the Declaration of Independence, you do not find him charged with having *seized and kept the custody* of the public money of the Colonies, or any one of them. He dared not do it. The Parliament would not have suffered their King to hold the custody of one shilling of public money; no, not if that shilling were drawn from colonial taxation.

That Parliament claimed, and attempted to exercise the right to raise and to control a money power in the Colonies, is true. They were resisted, however, in the outset. A revenue cutter was burned in Narraganset Bay. A cargo of tea, charged with a tax, was thrown over board in the harbor of Boston. This attempt to control the money power of the Colonies, though placed here as the third, was the first great turning principle of the Revolution. It made usurpation palpable. It embodied tyranny and placed all its odious deformities full in view. Resistance was immediate, united, universal; and was finally crowned with success.

My fellow citizens, on these great principles our country was settled, our revolution moved, our Independence achieved, and our governments, both of the several and the United States, established. Have those governments been administered according to those principles? It does not behoove us to examine the administration in any of the State Governments, else might we perhaps find, in New York, the parent plant of every poisonous scion, which has been engrafted into the policy and produced the measures of the National Administration.

The People who framed the constitution of that government, have told us, that it was instituted to form a more perfect Union, to establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common de-

fence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to them and their posterity. It was a government established for the people, intended to preserve their legislative ascendancy, to secure the public revenue, by retaining in their own control, or those of their immediate representatives, the great money power of the nation.

It has been seen that the first moving principle of the revolution was a question concerning the public treasure. The Constitution was intended to take care of this, by providing "that Congress shall dispose of, and make all necessary rules and regulations concerning the territory, and other property of the United States." Under this constitutional power, Congress had disposed of the public money, by making all needful rules and regulations concerning what taxes should be paid, and who should pay them; concerning how and by whom the money should be collected; where and by whom it should be kept; and for what purposes, to what men, and by whom it should be disbursed. Indeed, so perfect was the public money system of the United States, devised and established by Congress, that from 1816 up to 1833, more than \$550,000,000 had been assessed, collected, kept, and paid out, without the loss of a single cent. It is known to all men acquainted with public affairs, that the public money cannot be paid out *immediately* after it is paid into the hands of those who collect and keep it; and that *throughout the whole year*, from 6 to 10 millions of dollars, much must necessarily lie on hand, unemployed. Congress took care of this, for the benefit of the people. They so disposed of, and regulated the public money, that those who had the collection, keeping, and disbursement of it, were obliged to pay to the people a bonus, a stipulated sum, for the use of this annual surplus, deposited and lying in their hands. The sum paid by them, and the interest upon it, reckoning it at the rate and in the manner of dividends, paid out of the Treasury, for twenty years, the time stipulated for them to have the keeping of that money, amounts to \$5,000,000.

In 1833, the House of Representatives, by their Committee of ways and means, carefully examined the whole system: the manner of collecting, keeping, and disbursing the public money; and looked diligently into the regularity of the whole, especially inquiring after the *safety* of this great national Treasure. They reported *that all was right, all was safe*; and the House did, on the second day of March, 1833, receive and adopt that report; and by a large majority, resolved that the national money was safe in the national Treasury. After this, in September, 1833, the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr Duane, re-examined the whole, and adjudged that this money was safe, and refused to order its removal.

Notwithstanding all these things, the President, under the advice of Mr Van Buren, did, in the October following, what neither the first Charles, nor the second James, nor the third George, Kings of England, ever dared to do; he seized the public treasure, removed the whole mass from the treasury house appointed by Congress, and from the care and safe keeping of those into whose hands it had by them, been committed; and having done this, he placed this money in those State Banks, with which, Amos Kendall, an agent appointed by himself, had contracted for the keeping of it. This was done not only without any shadow of legal authority, but con-

trary to law, in violation of the constitution, and against one of the great principles of our glorious revolution. It was and still is a naked act of usurpation, such as was never before done or attempted, by any executive, whether king, prince, or precedent of any constitutional Government on earth. It was admitted, in debate, last session in the House of Representatives, by Mr Polk, one of the most zealous partizans and distinguished favorites of Gen. Jackson, that "the public money had for some time past been managed *without* any law, and by the *discretion* of the President." This act was condemned by the Senate; and never would the executive partizans, either bring it themselves, or suffer it by others to be brought before the House of Representatives. I have myself offered two resolutions for that purpose; Mr Evans of Maine, offered several more, and others have attempted the same thing, but they were all laid on the table; and the House was never suffered to vote directly on the question. The deed, therefore, stands condemned, by Congress, by all good men and patriots in the nation; and the perpetrators of it, by their own conduct, have also set upon it, the seal of condemnation.

For what has this violation of the treasury been perpetrated? Why has this money been placed beyond the control of Congress? Why has it been given to State Banks not accountable to them, and which pay the people nothing for the use of their money? These Banks have annually a surplus, deposited in their vaults, by this measure, of not less than \$7,000,000. They can loan upon this sum, and keep in circulation, not less than three times that amount. Twenty one millions will give to them an interest annually of \$1,260,000. They pay nothing to the people for the use of their money. If any thing is paid, it is paid to the Kendals, and Whitneys, and O'Sallivans, who are appointed by the lower Cabinet, to direct these Banks, and inspect, not their financial, but their political conduct.

For what purpose, I again ask, has this been done? Why has this bounty of more than twelve hundred thousand dollars a year, been given to one hundred or more of these State Banks? Not for the safety of the treasure, for it was safe before. Not for the benefit of the people, for these Banks pay nothing to the people for the use of this money. This money was given, for the benefit of those who gave it. It is a direct bribe, to secure the election of Martin Van Buren, who advised the measure. It adds \$7,000,000 to the capital, \$21,000,000 to the circulation and discounts, of these 100 Banks; \$1,000,000 to their annual revenue, and leaves them \$260,000 to pay political agents to visit, to direct and control the political movements of all connected with them. Each President of each of these Banks, will, when the time of election comes, be told that "*they must support those who support them.*" This will be laid before the Directors and Stockholders and Debtors; and they will fully understand, that the Deposits will be *instantly withdrawn*, unless they support the Van Buren ticket. This is, and has been, the New York policy and practice.

People of Rhode Island, will you submit to this? Will you see the great principles of the Revolution violated; the glorious achievements of your fathers dishonored and disgraced; their consecrated blood trampled under foot, by tyranny and usurpation; and you yourselves bribed and bought, by your own money, to support

men who have done, and are doing all these rank abominations? No; by the memory of the brave, the wise and the good, I hear you swear you will never do this.

By another great principle of the Revolution, the people claimed the right, by themselves or their representatives, to make their own laws. There was some limitation, it is true, to this claim, and it was admitted that those laws should not contravene those of England; but the Colonists never admitted the Veto power of the King, to any great extent; and one of the accusations against him, was, that "He had refused his assent to the most wholesome laws." If the exercise of this Veto power, rendered the English King so obnoxious to the fathers of the Revolution, what shall we say of the President, for his exercise of it? We know that, by the Constitution, all legislative power, conveyed by that grant, is vested in Congress; and yet the Veto power has been so exercised by the President, that all legislation is controled by him. This power was given to him, that thereby, he might guard the executive power against the encroachments of the legislature; but he has so managed it as to swallow up in the Veto, not only this, but the judicial power also. He has, by his Veto, cut up the whole system of Internal Improvement, and deprived Congress of all power to regulate commerce between the several States and among the Indian tribes. A law, enacted in 1802, regulating intercourse with the Indian tribes, and protecting them against the intrusion of white men, he has refused to execute; and though approved by Mr. Jefferson and executed by him, by Mr. Madison, by Mr. Monroe, and by Mr. Adams, General Jackson has declared it unconstitutional, and in effect placed the Veto power upon it. In consideration of large tracts of land ceded to the United States by the Cherokees, the United States did, by the most solemn treaties, guarantee to the Cherokees, the security of all their remaining land. These treaties the President has declared unconstitutional, against the adjudications of the Supreme Court of the United States; and placing his Veto on compacts which are the supreme laws of the land, and which all the powers of our government could never abolish or repeal, he has delivered the lands of that wronged, injured and insulted people, to the State of Georgia; and left their lawful owners to be scourged, imprisoned, murdered, or banished from their own country.

Mr. Madison originally doubted the constitutionality of a Bank of the United States; but in 1816 he approved the law by which it was chartered. He did this because, as he said, the constitutional question had been settled, by Congress, by the Supreme Court, and by the voice of the people. Though both Houses of Congress, the Senate and House of Representatives, had, by large majorities, re-chartered that Bank, yet Gen. Jackson, regardless of the adjudication of the Supreme Court, the enactment of Congress, the voice of the people, and the example and high authority of Mr. Madison, placed his veto on a law, enacted to secure the national treasure, preserve a sound and uniform currency, and facilitate the operations of commerce in every part of the country.

I will mention but one other departure from the principles of the revolution by the exercise of the veto power. The public lands belong to all the several States; and the United States are their trustees to receive and distribute among them the amount for which

these lands may be sold. This sum amounts annually to not less than \$3,000,000. The dividend of Rhode Island would be about \$25,000 a year. A Bill passed through both Houses of Congress, providing for this distribution; but the President brought it under his all-nullifying power, and placed his veto upon this measure, so dear to so many of the people, and so valuable to our State. Other States have had some share already in those lands, which lay within their chartered limits. Georgia has received from the United States more than the value of \$25,000,000. Virginia received large tracts, and has lately received additions to them, to reward her revolutionary soldiers and militia. Connecticut sold her reservation for several millions of dollars, and has now an immense fund for the support of schools. Massachusetts and Maine, New-Hampshire and Vermont, have all large tracts of wild lands. Rhode Island, cut off, by surrounding States, from all proximity to these lands, has never received so much as an acre of soil or a cent of money from them all. What State, in the revolutionary war, expended her treasure more freely, or fought more gallantly, or bled more profusely, than our little valiant Rhode Island?

I pray of you, my fellow citizens, to consider what a commentary this exercise of the veto power, is on the principles of the revolution! What a reward of revolutionary merit! Will Rhode Island support men, who support measures teeming with such ingratitude, such rank injustice! Will you labor to secure to yourselves that successor to the present chief, who has pledged himself to walk in his footsteps, and finish that work of usurpation and injustice which he has so gloriously begun? Not if you are men, and mindful of your laws, your liberties, your rights, and the just rewards of those who, by their blood and treasure, achieved the revolution.

Once more, let us inquire how the present administration has sustained that other great principle of the revolution, that all governments are instituted for the benefit of the people, the whole people; but not exclusively for the gain or aggrandizement of any one man, or any class or description of men. When was this great principle first obliterated from the records of our national policy? When were the many, the people, forgotten, and the benefits of government declared to belong to the few? Not even to a whole party, certainly not to the wise, the honest, the independent, the constitutionally faithful; but to the favorites, the flatterers, the sycophants of that party. It was in the year 1829. Then it was first announced, that government was established to create offices with high honors, and large emoluments for such men as these, the Van Burens and the Kendalls of our country. The old revolutionary maxim of government to protect life, secure liberty, preserve the fruits of labor, then first became obsolete. Men then stooped their necks to the collar, marked with the name of a political chief. In former times men had taken their political names from their political principles. Then Demagogues who were themselves without any such distinguished mark, chose to place their own names on their own followers. Thus it was, that many honest men, many patriotic men, forgetful of themselves, and of their country, suffered themselves to be degraded into partizans, that a few of the unprincipled, the ambitious, the avaricious, might, from their shoulders, vault into high seats of honor, and office of large emolument.

Then first a President of the United States assumed the kingly style; and the government of the American People and their public servants were by him called "My Government, My Departments, My Secretaries, My Clerks, My Army, My Navy," and last of all, *My Treasury*."—It is solemnly true, that the whole government has ceased to be administered for the benefit of the people; and converted into a machine to subserve the ambition and avarice of those, who were originally intended to be the servants of the people, the holders of executive offices. What benefit will you, my fellow citizens, in a few years, derive from the United States Government? The veto has been placed on internal improvements; and no more money will be expended to facilitate the travel and transportation of the country. The veto will also, by the next year have destroyed the currency, which passed with a value equal to gold and silver, in every State; and you can then neither travel nor trade beyond your own neighborhood, without paying a premium to brokers and money changers, as often as you pass from one State to another. All laws for protecting domestic industry, will be at an end in a few years; and you are now utterly refused any separate share in the public lands. Jackson Men, Van Buren Men, what do you gain by your devotion to such leaders? A Government for yourselves, and your children? No. Your friends get offices, in the Custom House, in the Post Office establishment, with Marshals and Deputy Marshals. John R. Waterman gets \$2,400 a year. E. J. Mallett, the son-in-law of Gov. Fenner, gets as Post Master, \$3,500 a year. Look through the country, many are laboring, and toiling in the collar and harness of the party, that a few, who put on the load, and drive them, may feed and fatten on the public provender.

Tell me not that there must be officers, and they must be paid. I know it. I admit it all; but when government is perverted, and degraded, from a government for the People, to a government, not even for a party; but for a mere congregation and cabal of Officers; then it is that the people should awaken to their rights, and with vigor restore the Commonwealth to its original and pristine purposes. Does any one disbelieve this, let him, with me, look into the measures of this administration, present, and past; and he will find every thing contrived, and calculated for this sole and exclusive purpose.

The first step taken in this course, was to change the object of Government from the people to the party. This was done; and it was announced that the President would reward his followers, and punish his opposers. This doctrine was promulgated, by the confidential agent of the President in 1829, before his inauguration, and while he was forming his cabinet, court followers and associates. Presidents had before been elected, by parties. The People had freely exercised their electoral rights; and never had any man apprehended, that the time would ever come, in our liberal and republican country, that the successful candidate would cause it to be proclaimed, that he was not the President of the whole people, but merely of a party; and that he would so administer the Government, as to punish those free born Americans who had dared to vote against his elevation to the Chief Magistracy.

The second step was still further to circumscribe the benefits of government; and not only to confine those benefits to that party, but to a selected few; to those who might be appointed to hold offices.

It was thereupon proclaimed that all the benefits of Government were the spoils of political victory, and were to be carried off, and shared by the triumphant party. What were these spoils? Not the effects of a wise and constitutional administration; but the offices, the honors, the emoluments in the power, and gifts of the President. These could not be divided to the whole party, share and share alike, but were carried off by the most zealous, noisy, and unprincipled. Accordingly we find, that early in this administration, every officer, not of this description, was removed, and all places were filled with—forgive me, if I do not attempt to tell you with what kind of persons.

The third step in this progress was made, by increasing the number of offices. It was found that but few of the partizans of power, could receive exclusive benefit, from the administration, unless new offices could be created for their accommodation. Offices were, therefore, multiplied for that purpose. In 1832, the Custom House officers, in the State of Rhode Island, had been multiplied, until the number was 82. Since that time, they have been increased to, I know not what number. In the port of New York alone, there are more than 800. In this State, these officers were once so few, that they were paid, and liberally paid, by a certain per centage on the amount of the revenue, and by certain fees for specific services rendered; but now the number has so increased here and elsewhere, that they cry out for a fixed salary; either because their services are so inconsiderable, or the revenue so small that it will not pay them; and Congress was, last winter, employed many weeks, in forming a system for this purpose. For want of time it was not finished.

From 1829 to 1832, the number of Post Offices had been increased from 8,000 to 12,000. Almost all the contracts for transporting the mail have, by the impositions of the General Post Office, been given to partizan favorites; so that by disclosing offers made for carrying, or by changing the terms of advertisement, or by extra allowances, the two great parties, that is the people, have been defrauded of half a million of dollars, and a selected number of individuals, have received the whole benefit of this expenditure.

Innumerable Indian treaties have been made with almost every tribe. This policy employs commissioners, interpreters, men to furnish accommodations to the parties, such as tents, goods for presents, rations for subsistence, and liquors for all purposes. In every treaty, certain parcels of lands are reserved, by numbers of the principal chiefs and warriors. These cannot be sold but by the consent of the President, and are always bought by his favorites, at a low rate. In every treaty annuities are given to the tribe, and certain sums in clothing and provisions, to aid them in removing beyond the Mississippi. Here are offices furnished for payers of annuities, agents of removal, providers of rations, furnishers of clothing, and stationary agents, after they have arrived at their new location. In this manner Indian annuities have, in seven years, been increased from about \$330,000 to nearly a million a year: and officers, employed in the Indian affairs, are so multiplied that they almost swarm over the wide and savage wilderness of the west. What benefit is all this to the people, to the Jackson or anti-Jackson men? We do not want their land. We have millions upon millions of acres, which have not, and will not for a century be brought into market. Why should our money be taken to buy it of the Indians; when,

neither Gen. Jackson, nor any President, who shall tread in his footsteps, and pursue his policy, will ever suffer us, or our children, to receive one cent from the sales of it? It furnishes salaries for officers. It is, it is, my fellow citizens, a part of that outrageous policy, which is rapidly changing our whole system, from what it was seven years ago, a government for the benefit of the people, to a mere scheme to multiply and enrich the holders of offices, and receivers of salaries. We, we are the payers of taxes; and they, they are the collectors and holders, and consumers of the money.

By a fourth step, in this course of perverting the government from its original purpose, the Press has been enlisted into the service, and all connected with it are made officers and placed under pay. By this process the current of truth is poisoned at the very fountain head. The political press was established, and made free, by the Constitution, solely for the benefit of the people. Those who manage this press, are the centinels of the nation. They should stand between the people and their public servants, unbribed, unbought, and in all the purity of a perfect independence. *What a host of them are now pensioned and paid!!* From end to end of the United States, *they are touched and contaminated* by the public money. *Not one of all these, no matter how small his pay, dares to lisp, or print a syllable against not even the most gross abominations of executive power.*

Last session of Congress an attempt was made to correct this abuse. I offered a resolution, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; and they were directed to inquire into the expediency of having all the public printing done in the District of Columbia, and excluding all printers of newspapers from doing any part of it. This would have cut up by the roots, this whole system of corruption, and left the political press, free to tell the truth to the people. This resolution raised an outcry against me, and I was denounced from Maine to Kentucky. The majority, five out of nine, of the Committee, reported against the resolution. The overflowing bitterness, and labored perversions of that report, clearly proved the high value set on a corrupted press; and showed, at what a cost it had been brought to its present subservient condition.

Do not then, my fellow citizens, expect truth from Newspapers in the pay of the administration. Those who conduct them, are office-holders, and they dare not, they cannot tell the truth, until they resolve to give up their pay, and become independent men. One *printed word* of truth against the men in power, would strike them from their hold on Executive patronage, just as certainly and as quickly as you with a pole could strike a nest of caterpillars from the limb of an apple-tree in your orchard.

A fifth step in the progress of excluding the people from the benefits of Government, and transferring those benefits to the immediate servants and executive officers of the administration, was the seizure and removal of the money of the people from their treasury; and placing it in the hands of numerous State corporations with banking powers. The whole revenue of the nation is, by this measure, deposited in these State Banks. The amount is from 20 to \$30,000,000 a year; and the average sum, which will be continually in them, cannot be less than 7,000,000 at all times. *The single act has constituted, ordained and appointed, each president, cashier, clerk, direc-*

tor and stockholder of all these numerous State Banks, an officer of the President of the United States. These new officers, created by the act of the President alone, and removable at his pleasure, are all under pay. They have the use of \$7,000,000 per annum. It is worth to the people, \$420,000 a year; for that amount invested in the shares of the United States Bank, which has been destroyed by the veto of the President, gave to them annually, that sum in dividends. There is 100, or more of these Banks. On this deposit of the people's money, they can put into circulation more than twenty millions, and clear a yearly dividend of more than one million of dollars. No matter how great or how small may be their stocks, or how many or how few may be the number of these stockholders, they are all executive officers, under government pay; for they will all receive their rateable share of this yearly million of dollars. It is no matter to the people, they will never touch a cent of this money. No matter to you or to me; to whig or tory; to Van Buren man or Webster man; White man or Harrison man; not one of us all, unless we are stockholders and office holders, we shall reap not a grain of all this golden yearly harvest.

I tell you, people of Rhode Island, and if I could speak to the whole nation, I would tell every man in our country, the Government is totally changed and perverted from its original use and purpose. It is no longer a government for the benefit of the people; but is held and administered, solely for the benefit of the office holders. Don't tell me, that these Banks will be visited by two or three hundred agents and supervisors, to direct and keep them in the service. I know it all, and I admit it all; and they must be paid out of the yearly dividends. This will only add so many more to the number of executive officers and increase the number of those who live on the plunder of the people. Will the people gain a cent by all this? What farmer, think you, is made the richer by multiplying the number of vermin which feed upon his grain stacks or corn cribs?

A sixth step in the progress of perverting the Government, has been taken in relation to the public lands. It has been seen that by the exercise of the Veto by the President, this State has lost *this year*, at least \$25,000; for if the land law had not been rejected by him, this year, the first dividend would have been paid into our State treasury. It would never have been diminished in amount, and would have been paid continually, until our whole one thousand millions of acres of wild lands had been sold and peopled by settlers. No nation on earth has such a treasure of soil and fertility. It would not be exhausted in centuries. Part of it was won from the British King by the revolutionary war, by the blood of some, who fell on the battle field, and some who stand here this day among us. Part was purchased of France, and part of Spain; and the Indian title has been extinguished, by purchases made with the common treasure of the whole nation. It is a common fund. Each State is entitled to its share. By the constitution, Congress is vested with the sole power to dispose of this territory. Why then, when Congress passed a law to dispose of this fund, by giving each State its annual share, in the annual amount of sales of this land; why did the President place his veto upon that law, and thus pervert the original purpose of the government, from this universal benefit of the whole people?

The purpose is manifest. It would drain out of the treasury at least three millions annually ; and transfer the yearly disbursement of that sum, from the executive of the United States, to the legislatures of the several States. It would to that amount shrink the gigantic dimensions of presidential patronage. It would benefit the people ; but it would curtail the number and lessen the pay of executive officers. Although this veto was passed before the seizure and removal of the people's money, yet that measure was then in preparation and progress. Had the land law been approved, the President and his successor would have had three millions less at their disposal; *for no state would have left a cent of the money for a day in any one of their depository Banks.*

It was feared that the distribution of this money, to the several States, would introduce more care and diligence, and detect or prevent the frauds and peculations of the general land office. Each State would probably have an eye on that great system and exclude thousands of executive favorites, who are now growing rich on the national plunder. Time would fail me, should I attempt, on this occasion, to narrate to you the kinds and number of frauds now successfully put in practice against the people, and their interests in relation to the public lands. A committee of the Senate have been employed in the investigation of this department of the public service. They have not yet fully reported, but the chairman of that committee, has publicly stated, that it already appears, according to the judgment of men best acquainted with these matters, that frauds have been committed against the people, to the amount of \$10,000,000. This could not have been done without the connivance of executive officers ; and, therefore, it is certain that none but executive favorites have been admitted to the benefits. Thus you see, my fellow citizens, that all the benefits, which the government was established to give to the people by the public funds, or the public lands, are taken from them, whether Jackson or Anti-Jackson, Van Buren or Anti-Van Buren men ; and are bestowed on office holders, or those who surround the palace of power and prostrate themselves before executive sycophants. Will you support men, who support such men and such measures ? If you do this, what battle field of the revolution, what survivor of those glorious days, nay what grave of your fathers, will not cry out against you ?

These things have been done, and some others attempted, in perversion of the great principles of the Revolution. I will mention but two of them.

You all remember, that, after years of toil and effort in Congress, by the friends of the revolutionary soldiers, a system of laws was established, by which, all, who had been in the service during six months, should receive a pension during the remainder of their lives. It is needless to name those who labored most for those veterans ; nor would I mention that now, had not some political miscreants endeavored to slander me, by propagating a report that I was opposed to this measure. Let them live to repent of their wickedness ; but let their falsehood perish ; for I was the first man who brought a Bill into Congress to provide for *all* the enlisted soldiers then alive. Nay more ; by that Bill, a provision was made for the widows of those who were already dead. I did believe that those patriotic women, who had sent their young husbands into the war, and endured for

seven years, all the anxiety and desolation of a youthful widowhood, merited a high reward from their country. This measure was not carried, but it has not been given up, by those who originally supported it. I will say it to you, my fellow citizens, for it is true, although it is already known, and acknowledged in every other State in the Union; I will say that I have labored, for the soldiers of the Revolution alive, and for the widows of the dead, with untiring diligence, and with a zeal which nothing ever cooled or abated. Those who say, or have said otherwise of me, I leave to the infamy and the enjoyment of their own calumny.

I have been hurried from my purpose. This subject was mentioned to show how it is intended by the Executive to pervert the purposes of the Government, in providing for these men, into a scheme to create and to benefit a new set of Presidential officers. I cannot tell to you the story of this, in any better words than I used, on another occasion. Permit me, then, to use them here.

Last year, and the year before, two or three men, *not pensioners*, were detected in the practice of frauds on the treasury. They had fabricated papers in the names of men who were dead; and by a daring course of forgery and other crimes, succeeded in cheating the public out of perhaps fifty thousand dollars. It is admitted that no soldier ever had any connexion with these felonies.

Now what is proposed to be done by way of remedy? The President, himself a soldier, and as it is often boasted by his partizans, the hero of two wars, but rich in lands, in goods, in money, and in laborers; the President did, in the last annual message to Congress, make the following recommendation, concerning all these poor, aged and infirm pensioners. The object, says he, should be twofold:—"1. To look into the original justice of the claims, so far as this can be done under a proper system of regulations, by an examination of the claimants themselves, and by inquiring, in the vicinity of their residence, into their history, and into the opinion entertained of their revolutionary services. 2. To ascertain, in all cases, whether the original claimant is living, and this by actual personal inspection. This measure will, if adopted, be productive, I think, of the desired results, and I therefore recommend it to your consideration, with the further suggestion, that all payments should be suspended till the necessary reports are received."

What was done? The Committee on Military Pensioners took the case into their grave consideration. They reported a bill providing for the evil according to the recommendation of the President. It was not brought up for debate, or vote; but the measure is proposed, and the measure may be adopted. By this bill, commissioners are to be appointed, by *Executive authority*, in *every* county of the U. States. Look you, my neighbors; *commissioners in every county!* A new army, another host of officers. What is their service? To call together these pensioners; these men of scars and wounds; old, dercepit. and tottering on the face of that country, which, before these men who thus call them, were in life, was won, by their labor and blood. If thus without cause, they are to hunt them out, from cottage to cottage, or field to field, and find all who are alive, and by *personal inspection*, ascertain that they are the same men, who fought, and bled, before these inquisitors of Executive power were born.

These young officers of this military commission, are to re-exam-

ine all these aged, and blind, and deaf, and palsied, and maimed veterans, and ascertain whether they hold in their memories now, exactly the same acts of the wars, which, in their younger years, were so *freshly recollected* by them. For that purpose, no doubt, this scrutinizing court will be furnished with the *original declarations*, made in open court, by these old soldiers, *in their better days*; and when each one of them could not only *tell* of wars, but

“Shoulder his crutch, and *show* how fields were won.”

One other provision, the President recommends, that the public money, so dear to his successor and to all his friends, may be safe. Nay, that these venerable remnants of the days of our patriotism and valor, may be all in the care, and safe keeping of this new Inquisition, it is *directed to be provided*, that *all payment* of these pensioners shall be *suspended* until all is finished. Who shall feed, and clothe, and shelter these men, while this re-examination is beginning, and progressing, and completing, in all parts of the United States, and then at Washington?

By this process, it is believed, that all pensioners, and their sons, and grandsons, and brothers, and neighbors, will, to propitiate these inquisitors, *at once think, and talk, and vote*, just as, at *Washington or Albany*, it may be *required* of them.

Who could have devised a scheme so unjust, so cruel, so destitute of all feeling? Who could dare to take from these men their little annuities, their daily bread, their necessary clothing, so payable, and pledged to them, *as it is*, by their country, for their blood, long ago shed, their wounds, long ago suffered? It is a deep laid scheme of official plunder; and must have been intended to collect all these men, with all their relations, friends, and connexions, within the wide circle drawn around our country by the political influence of Executive patronage.

It was designed for the purpose of creating another class of officers, and for paying them out of the fund appropriated by Congress, for the support of that aged remnant of our patriotic army, who have lived to witness and to feel the gratitude of their country. Will you, citizens of Rhode Island, suffer this fund to be thus diverted to the political purpose of creating and paying another hord of officers? You will, you will, if you support men, who are pledged to support the nominated successor of the present Chief Magistrate. This measure will be pressed at the next session of Congress; for when was Gen. Jackson known to relinquish his purposes? What will you, what will the people gain by his success? The money saved, by starving revolutionary soldiers, will go to increase the number, and enlarge the pay of executive officers.

Let me detain you a moment longer, to mention one other attempt to pervert the purposes of our government. You all remember that last winter, much rumor of a war with France was spread over the country. The President had recommended arming our ships, and committing reprisals on the commerce of French merchants. Both Houses of Congress had decided against this and all measures of hostility; and every fear, or feeling of war had passed away in the Halls of the National Legislature, and from the minds of the people. Notwithstanding this, a devoted partizan of Mr. Van Buren, a friend and favorite of the President, did, on the last

night of the last session of Congress, offer an amendment to the Fortification Bill, which had been sent back from the Senate, and laid on the table of the House, for almost a week. By this amendment, it was proposed to place in the hands of the President \$3,000,000, as it was pretended, for the defence of the country. Every man knew that the country was in no danger; every man knew that the money would be used for no other purpose than to increase Presidential patronage, by multiplying offices, creating salaries, and ultimately depriving the people of just so much of their money. The Senate offered to increase the Navy, offered to arm our Fortifications, and to appropriate more money for these purposes; but they refused to place this money at the disposal of the President without any specific purpose of appropriation; and although, by this extravagant partizan measure, the Fortification Bill was lost; yet by the Senate the people were saved the three millions of dollars, and this scheme of new brigades of officers, with new salaries, and a new and extravagant expenditure, was frustrated.

People of Rhode Island, fellow citizens, who have so long and so highly honored me with your confidence, I have faithfully pointed out to you, some of the departures of the present administration, from the great principles of the revolution. I have shewn how the entrenchments of executive power are drawn around you; and how you are already cut off from your money and your lands, and how you may soon be separated from your liberties. I have stated nothing through favor, affection, or hope of reward; but I have presented things truly, and as they have come to my knowledge. I have no interest separate from yours. You are the source of all the honors which I ever have, or ever shall receive. I am one of the people. All my interests are united with your interests, and nothing earthly can ever separate them. The government which was established by our fathers for our benefit, has been by those who were appointed to administer its laws, perverted utterly and turned to the mere use of themselves, and the host of executive officers, who surround them, and are devoted to their will and pleasure. Our money and our lands, the fruits of our labors have been taken from us. Our liberties will soon follow, and then life will not be worth preserving.

It is time, it is high time to awaken from supineness and slumber. A President of the United States is to be elected the next year, and this is the year, this is the time to secure to that high office, the election of a friend to the principles of the revolution, a friend to the great principles of our government, a friend to the people, the whole people and none but the people.